

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA US DISTRICT COURT

10. 17 2025

EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA DEPUTY CLERK

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27 28 Jamie Osuna BD0868 CSP-COR PO BOX 3476 CORCORAN, CA 93212

Non-Party Intervenor/Real Party in Interest,

Dora Solares, Plaintiff,

Diaz, et al

v.

Defendants

1:20-cv-00323-LHR-BAM No.

NON-PARTY JAMIE OSUNA'S EMERGENCY MOTION FOR PROTECTIVE ORDER UNDER RULE 26(C), TO QUASH DEPOSITION NOTICE UNDER RULE 45 (D), TO VACATE ORDER COMPELLING TESTIMONY, AND REQUEST FOR ALTERNATIVE SERVICE

NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR ALTERNATIVE SERVICE:

Mr. Osuna respectfully requests permission to serve and be served via alternative means as described in Section IV below.

TO THE HONORABLE COURT:

Non-party Jamie Osuna, currently incarcerated at CSP-Corcoran, respectfully moves this Court for a Protective Order under Rule 26(c) and to quash a deposition notice under Rule 45(d), and to vacate any order purporting to allow his compelled participation without notice or hearing.

I. INTRODUCTION

Mr. Osuna does not raise these issues to impugn counsel, but to ensure his constitutional and privacy rights are protected in a highly sensitive and parallel criminal context.

On June 16, 2025, the Court granted leave to depose Mr. Osuna (ECF, Dckt. 170). Mr. Osuna was never served with the

underlying motion or given any opportunity to be heard. The first time he became aware of the Court's decision was after its entry. This constitutes a violation of Mr. Osuna's procedural due process rights under *Mullane v. Central Hanover Bank & Trust Co.*, 339 U.S. 306 (1950). The deposition is pending, and the urgency of this motion is heightened.

Pending Appeal Context: Mr. Osuna has a related interlocutory appeal pending in the Ninth Circuit concerning prior compelled disclosures of privileged records/improper waiver of privileges. Although that appeal does not explicitly address the deposition now sought, the issues are intertwined. The appeal challenges the same pattern of discovery abuse, lack of notice, and disregard for constitutional protections that this motion seeks to prevent from recurring or expanding.

II. LEGAL GROUNDS FOR PROTECTIVE RELIEF

A. NO NOTICE OR OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEARD

Point of Authority: <u>Mullane v. Central Hanover Bank & Trust</u>
Co., 339 U.S. 306 (1950) (notice and opportunity to be heard are
fundamental to due process); *Goldberg v. Kelly*, 397 U.S. 254
(1970) (procedural due process requires meaningful opportunity to
be heard before rights are affected); Fed. R. Civ. P.
45(d)(3)(A)(iii) (court must quash or modify subpoena that
requires disclosure of privileged or protected matter if no
exception or waiver applies).

Non-parties can only be compelled to testify via subpoena under Fed. R. Civ. P. 45 and must be afforded notice and a chance to object. Mr. Osuna was not given notice or served. As a result, the order authorizing the deposition lacks legal effect as to him

and violates the fundamental fairness standard set in $Goldberg\ v$. Kelly, 397 U.S. 254 (1970).

B. IMPROPER "ATTORNEY'S EYES ONLY" ARGUMENT

Point of Authority: Seattle Times Co. v. Rhinehart, 467 U.S. 20, 35-36 (1984) (protective orders do not eliminate the risk of reputational harm from sensitive disclosures); In re Roman Catholic Archbishop of Portland, 661 F.3d 417, 425 (9th Cir. 2011) (once discovery materials enter public record, irreparable harm may follow); Jaffee v. Redmond, 518 U.S. 1, 15-18 (1996) (mental health communications protected by federal privilege that is not easily overridden).

Darling has contended through multiple filings that any sensitive materials would remain confidential via for "attorney's eyes only." However, labeling such materials "attorney's eyes only" offers Mr. Osuna no meaningful protection. As a third party to his civil litigation and an incarcerated criminal defendant in a pending capital case, Mr. Osuna cannot review or respond to AEO-designated documents, nor use them to challenge civil allegations or correct misrepresentations. Meanwhile, counsel gains access to privileged mental health and custodial records for strategic purposes. AEO status does not preserve privilege—it merely prevents the person whose rights are at stake from defending those rights, while enabling selective and potentially prejudicial use by others. Despite Darling's contention of AEO-designation:

- 1. Darling quoted and referenced such materials in *Dckt*. 137 and other filings;
- 2. The case has garnered public attention from media, including

Courthouse News, KGET17, and others, who echoed Darling's allegations, language, and filings;

3. The Supreme Court in Seattle Times Co. v. Rhinehart, 467
U.S. 20 (1984), and the Ninth Circuit in In re Roman
Catholic Archbishop of Portland, 661 F.3d 417 (9th Cir.
2011), held that protective orders are not substitutes for respecting fundamental privileges, particularly when prior conduct suggests intent to publicize or leak.

Moreover, because Plaintiff does not bear the burden of proof beyond a reasonable doubt in this civil matter, the volume and intrusiveness of discovery aimed at Mr. Osuna—a third party facing capital charges—exceeds what is proportional or necessary under Rule 26(b)(1).

Courts have repeatedly emphasized that discovery mechanisms cannot be repurposed to bypass the protections of a parallel criminal case. See *United States v. Kordel*, 397 U.S. 1 (1970); *United States v. Stringer*, 535 F.3d 929, 937-39 (9th Cir. 2008). Unlike typical civil discovery burdens, compelled psychiatric disclosures or custodial depositions here create unrecoverable constitutional harm—jeopardizing Mr. Osuna's Fifth and Sixth Amendment rights in a pending capital prosecution.

C. USE OF DISCOVERY FOR IMPROPER PURPOSES

Point of Authority: Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(b)(1) (discovery must be proportional and relevant); Roadway Express, Inc. v. Piper, 447 U.S. 752, 763-64 (1980) (courts have inherent power to guard against abuse of judicial process); ABA Model Rules 4.4(a), 8.4(c), California Rules of Professional Conduct 4.1, 4.4(a)

(lawyers must avoid misleading or prejudicial conduct).

Plaintiff's counsel, Erin Darling, is using discovery to:

- Force a waiver of privileges or create conflict with Mr.
 Osuna's defense in People v. Osuna, Kings County Sup. Ct.
 Case No. 19CM-1882;
- 2. Frame silence or objection as guilt to sway jurors;
- 3. Gain access to protected materials under the pretense of discovery/deposition.

Darling has presented contested interpretations of the record, referred to Mr. Osuna using inflammatory language in filings. This pattern raises serious questions about potential abuse of process (see Dckts. 119, 133, 137, 150, 177) and publicly referenced sealed psychiatric content. These filings include parsed quotations from protected mental health evaluations and alleged sealed interrogations. Simultaneously, he contacted Mr. Osuna's criminal counsel offering to advocate for a life sentence in exchange for civil cooperation. This arguably is abuse of process and arguably violates California Rules of Professional Conduct 4.1, 4.4(a), and ABA Model Rules 8.4(c).

D. IMPROPER CONTACT IN CRIMINAL CASE

Point of Authority: CA Rules of Professional Conduct 1.7(b), 8.4(d) (avoid conflicts of interest and prejudicial conduct); ABA Model Rules 4.3, 4.4(a); Sixth Amendment (right to counsel); Fed. R. Civ. P. 17(c)(2) (court must appoint guardian ad litem for an unrepresented, mentally impaired person in appropriate cases).

Darling contacted prosecution and defense teams in Osuna's

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capital case (*People v. Osuna*, 19CM-1882) proposing Osuna's help and cooperation in exchange for advocacy against the death penalty, as relayed to Osuna around April 2025. This back-channel communication raises ethical issues under CA RPC 1.7(b), 8.4(d) and violates Sixth Amendment safeguards. No guardian ad litem was appointed, despite clear mental health concerns. See Fed. R. Civ. P. 17(c)(2).

Importantly, once Mr. Osuna refused to cooperate or participate in the proposed exchange, Plaintiff's counsel escalated his tactics-pursuing increasingly aggressive discovery efforts targeting Osuna's psychiatric, legal, and privileged records. As the docket shows, through 2025, filings by Darling became more focused on compelling Osuna's deposition, referencing sealed evaluations, and repackaging KGET17 media statements from inmate Marcus Hume (CDCR #AM7003), whose prior testimony/ interviews have been subject to credibility challenges/ impeachment in other proceedings and/or media. Darling has a pending hearing to unseal Osuna's 2021 incompetency records with Kings County Superior Court [August 2025]. This demonstrates a coordinated effort to access protected mental health material across jurisdictions. This shift coincides with Mr. Osuna's refusal to cooperate and may reflect a departure from neutral civil discovery practices. Moreover, because Plaintiff does not bear the burden of proof beyond a reasonable doubt in this civil matter, the intensity and scope of discovery directed at Osuna-a third party-exceeds what is proportional or necessary under Rule 26(b).

This post-refusal escalation raises serious concerns that

discovery is being used not for fact-finding but as a retaliatory tool, inconsistent with the principles of proportionality and fairness under Rule 26(b) and the ethical duties imposed by Rule 4.4(a).

E. RETALIATORY USE OF CEASE-AND-DESIST LETTER

Point of Authority: California Constitution Art. I, § 3(b)(1) (protection from government retaliation for petitioning); CA RPC 3.4(e), ABA Rule 8.4(d) (prohibiting filing frivolous or retaliatory pleadings); Chambers v. NASCO, Inc., 501 U.S. 32, 45-46 (1991) (courts may sanction bad faith or abusive conduct in litigation).

Darling received a cease-and-desist letter from Osuna on July 9, 2025. Around within an hour of receiving it, he filed it publicly on the docket (*Dckt*. 194), without proof of service or explanation. This act appears retaliatory, in violation of California Constitution Art. I, § 3(b)(1) (right to petition without retaliation), CA RPC 3.4(e), and ABA Rule 8.4(d).

F. IMPROPER MOTIVES AND DISCOVERY ABUSE

Point of Authority: Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(g)(1)(B) (discovery must not be interposed for improper purpose, such as to harass or needlessly increase cost); Hardrick v. Legal Services Corp., 96 F.R.D. 617, 619 (D.D.C. 1983) (court may limit or deny discovery if purpose appears abusive or harassing).

Darling relies on a speculative theory that decedent Luis Romero filed a grievance naming Defendant Sgt. Burns. In fact, records indicate no such grievance exists and has not been produced. The actual grievance and 42 U.S.C. § 1983 against Defendant Sgt. [Burnes] was filed by Osuna in February 2019

(Asuna v. Brown, E.D. Cal.) Using this false/frivolous narrative to pursue Osuna's records violates discovery standards under Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(b)(1).

G. MEDIA COORDINATION AND BAD FAITH TACTICS

Point of Authority: Gentile v. State Bar of Nevada, 501 U.S. 1030 (1991) (attorney speech in pending cases is subject to regulation if it risks prejudice); Model Rule 3.6(a) (lawyers shall not make extrajudicial statements that materially prejudice proceedings); Yick Wo v. Hopkins, 118 U.S. 356 (1886) (facially neutral actions applied discriminatorily violate Equal Protection).

While this motion makes no claim of formal coordination between Plaintiff's counsel and media outlets, it highlights an ongoing public dynamic where Plaintiff and/or her family actively shape press narratives—often omitting crucial facts. Darling's filings closely mirror the public reporting by KGET17 and Olivia LaVoice, whose coverage:

- Echoes language from Darling's filings;
- Publishes materials closely tracking confidential and sealed filings;
- Presents a one-sided account omitting the decedent Luis Romero's violent background-including prior assaults on fellow inmates and conviction for the homicide of a minor.
- Bases discovery off KGET17/LaVoice's podcast and reporting that his own client was featured on/in; and even cites
 KGET17 as his source of information on Osuna. (Dckt.96);
- Includes commentary and imagery that may shape public

perception in a prejudicial manner toward Mr. Osuna while obscuring the fact that Romero was not due for parole for at least ten more years (2025) due to his ongoing violence against others.

This selective media narrative contributes to public prejudice against Mr. Osuna, while Plaintiff's counsel simultaneously claims discovery is purely for private legal use. The Court should consider that Darling's filings have already influenced public commentary, thereby undermining any assertion that sensitive discovery will remain confidential.

Importantly, while Romero's history of violence is never mentioned, Osuna—a third-party—is labeled a "killer" and "psychopath" and cast as the central figure of this litigation, overshadowing the official Defendants. This asymmetry is not just misleading, it is discriminatory: it privileges the reputational interests of government actors while vilifying a minority, mentally ill, unrepresented inmate.

Courts have consistently warned against litigation that manipulates public forums or relies on selective enforcement. When advocacy leverages inflammatory details about a third party's background while omitting materially relevant conduct by others, the risk of improper influence grows. See *Gentile*, 501 U.S. at 1075.

For these reasons, the Court should scrutinize Plaintiff's selective narratives and ensure that discovery, privilege, and media conduct remain properly balanced and constitutionally constrained.

H. FIFTH AMENDMENT SELF-INCRIMINATION RISK

Point of Authority: Estelle v. Smith, 451 U.S. 454, 468-69 (1981) (statements made without Miranda warnings or defense counsel present may violate Fifth and Sixth Amendments); Campbell v. Gerrans, 592 F.2d 1054 (9th Cir. 1979); Miranda v. Arizona, 384 U.S. 436 (1966); United States v. Kordel, 397 U.S. 1 (1970) (civil discovery may not be used to circumvent constitutional rights in a related criminal case).

Osuna's testimony risks direct or indirect self-incrimination. He is an active defendant in a capital case.

Estelle v. Smith, 451 U.S. 454 (1981), Campbell v. Gerrans, 592
F.2d 1054 (9th Cir. 1979), and Miranda v. Arizona, 384 U.S. 436 (1966), emphasize the need for protection when compelling statements from incarcerated, mentally ill individuals.

I. PSYCHOTHERAPIST-PATIENT PRIVILEGE APPLIES

Point of Authority: Jaffee v. Redmond, 518 U.S. 1 (1996) (federal recognition of psychotherapist-patient privilege); California Evidence Code §§ 1014, 1018 (privileged communications between patient and psychotherapist).

Darling seeks mental health and competency records. These are protected by California Evidence Code §§ 1014, 1018 and federal common law. Jaffee v. Redmond, 518 U.S. 1 (1996), established an absolute federal privilege protecting such communications, which cannot be waived casually or without clear notice and consent.

J. UNDUE BURDEN AND SECURITY RISKS

Point of Authority: *United States v. Kordel*, 397 U.S. 1, 11-13 (1970); *United States v. Stringer*, 535 F.3d 929, 937-39 (9th

Cir. 2008) (civil discovery cannot be used to bypass criminal procedure); Baxter v. Palmigiano, 425 U.S. 308 (1976) (inmates retain Fifth Amendment protections); Estelle v. Smith, 451 U.S. at 470-71 (involuntary custodial testimony is constitutionally suspect).

Osuna is a Level IV inmate. The logistical demands and coercive environment for any deposition involve CDCR officers, many of whom are expected to testify against him in 19CM-1882. This overlap makes any compelled deposition presumptively coercive. See *United States v. Kordel*, 397 U.S. 1 (1970), *United States v. Stringer*, 535 F.3d 929 (9th Cir. 2008).

K. DARLING'S PUBLIC PERSONA VS. ACTUAL CONDUCT

Point of Authority: ABA Model Rule 8.4(c) (lawyer shall not engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation); CA RPC 8.4(c); Model Rule 1.2(d) (lawyer must not use legal process to harass or maliciously injure another).

Publicly, Darling brands himself as a civil rights attorney advocating for marginalized groups, including racial minorities and victims of law enforcement misconduct. However, in this case:

- He treats CDCR correctional officers and staff, the actual Defendants, with professional neutrality;
- While he aggressively targets third party Osuna—an indigent Hispanic inmate—with invasive discovery and dehumanizing language; while simultaneously blocking Osuna's rights on all fronts, including opposing Osuna's interlocutory appeal, failing to give any service regarding the dozens of motions, filings and other proceedings, that seek Osuna's privileged materials, to

compel his cross-examination, inter alia.

- Darling has failed to file and/or equally aggressively pursue any *Pitchess* motion to obtain Defendants'-law/correctional enforcement-background, even referring to it in one docket entry as a "lower priority," unlike unrepresented third-party Osuna's confidential/privileged records, inter alia.
- Uses inflammatory language, derogatory references to and unverified/unofficial derogatory framing of Osuna's background as if Osuna were the defendant while never referencing the actual Defendants' backgrounds, characters, inter alia.

Instead, Darling focuses almost exclusively and discriminatorily on Osuna, demonstrating a prejudicial, scapegoating litigation approach, shielding government actors while vilifying a minority third party who lacks counsel and procedural protections. This asymmetry is ethically troubling and results in a litigation posture that reinforces a media narrative rather than focuses solely on the civil claims at issue.

Examples of Differential and Discriminatory Treatment of Osuna:

- 1. Darling uses inflammatory, dehumanizing language to describe
 Osuna-calling him a "killer" or "psychopath" and focusing on
 his alleged past violence-while entirely ignoring the
 conduct histories of government actors named as the
 Defendants, despite ample authority to request those
 records; this also includes the Decedent's violent
 background against inmates and killing of a minor;
- 2. The media mirrors this narrative, reinforcing the image of

- 3. Plaintiff's discovery demands disproportionately target
 Osuna, a non-party, while excusing or soft-pedaling
 inquiries into the actual Defendants' conduct, motivations,
 or backgrounds.
- 4. Osuna's privacy, psychiatric, and legal rights are consistently disregarded, while protective orders and procedural respect are afforded to institutional parties.
- 5. Media coordination (explicit or implicit) centers public narratives around Osuna's criminal charges rather than the alleged civil rights violations by correctional staff.
- 6. No guardian ad litem has been requested or appointed,
 despite Osuna's mental health diagnoses, while Darling
 appears to orchestrate indirect negotiations with criminal
 counsel outside of formal safeguards.
- 7. Plaintiff's counsel included a highly publicized photograph of Mr. Osuna—unrelated to these civil allegations—in the original and some amended complaints and described him as a "psychopath." This tactic emphasized Mr. Osuna's criminal identity in a way that may be perceived as prejudicial and reinforced a prejudicial narrative while omitting any corresponding context, photographs, or misconduct history of the actual Defendants or the Decedent. It exemplifies the discriminatory pattern of dehumanizing Osuna while shielding institutional actors from scrutiny.

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Legal and Ethical Concern:

Discriminatory litigation strategies that exploit the vulnerable status of a racial minority, incarcerated, mentally impaired individual, while shielding state actors from scrutiny, not only undermine the credibility of civil rights litigation—they raise serious constitutional concerns under the Equal Protection Clause and due process doctrine.

Courts have recognized in Yick Wo v. Hopkins, 118 U.S. 356 (1886), that facially neutral rules or litigation strategies can become unlawful when enforced in a deliberately unequal or targeted manner. When a civil rights plaintiff privileges the reputation and interests of government agents over those of a Hispanic third party—while leveraging inflammatory discovery, sealed documents, and public narratives to stigmatize that third party—courts must intervene.

III. RELIEF REQUESTED

Mr. Osuna requests that this Court stay any deposition pending an evidentiary hearing on privilege, necessity, and protective protocols.

Mr. Osuna respectfully requests that the Court:

- 1. Quash or vacate the June 16, 2025 order authorizing his deposition;
- 2. Enter a protective order under Rule 26(c) prohibiting any deposition or discovery from Osuna without:
 - a. Proper notice, hearing, and subpoena;
 - b. Opportunity to be heard on privilege and constitutional rights;

c. Proof of necessity and relevance;

- 3. Declare any prior waiver of Osuna's privileges as invalid absent notice and hearing;
- 4. Bar any public filing or discussion of Osuna's psychiatric or sealed materials;
- 5. Grant any other relief this Court deems just and proper.
- 6. That this Court **take judicial notice** of the pending interlocutory appeal and refrain from issuing rulings that may create jurisdictional overlap or duplicative prejudice.

IV. REQUEST FOR ALTERNATIVE SERVICE

Due to Mr. Osuna's current incarceration at CSP-Corcoran and his pro se status, traditional methods of service are impractical and often result in unreasonable delay. Additionally, it is frequently difficult for Mr. Osuna to locate or rely upon others who are willing and able to sign or verify traditional proof of service forms. Authorizing alternative service via court-facilitated ECF entry will ensure transparency, timeliness, and reliability of notice to all parties without imposing unrealistic burdens on an incarcerated, unrepresented litigant.

Furthermore, Mr. Osuna faces ongoing institutional barriers that further prevent meaningful access to regular service procedures. At present, CSP-Corcoran staff-particularly the Litigation Coordinator/staff [R. Laber; P. Williams; Dan]-have refused to process or forward legal documents on his behalf, including but not limited to filings, subpoenas, and trust account statements required for federal or state court submissions. This refusal has effectively denied Mr. Osuna access

to basic litigation functions and imposed unconstitutional barriers to participation in legal proceedings affecting his rights. These obstructions, combined with the prison's inconsistent mail procedures and limited access to legal assistance, make it functionally impossible for Mr. Osuna to satisfy traditional service requirements.

Accordingly, Mr. Osuna respectfully requests that the Court authorize alternative service under Fed. R. Civ. P. 5(b)(2)(E) and any applicable local rules. He requests permission to effect service, and receive service, by mailing all filings via United States Postal Service (USPS) to the Clerk of the Court, who will then docket the filings into the CM/ECF system. Once filed, the ECF system will automatically serve all parties of record pursuant to the Court's standard electronic service procedures. This ensures proper and timely service to all parties, accommodates institutional constraints, and avoids undue delay or prejudice due to Osuna's inability to use electronic filing systems.

Respectfully submitted July 15, 2025,

Tame Count

p.p. Jamie Osuna (CDCR BD0868)

PROOF OF SERVICE

I, Jamie Osuna, CDCR No. BD0868, declare:

I am a self-represented third party for this case, currently incarcerated at California State Prison-Corcoran (CSP-COR), located at P.O. Box 3476, Corcoran, CA 93212.

July 15, 2025, I served the attached:

NON-PARTY JAMIE OSUNA'S MOTION FOR PROTECTIVE ORDER UNDER RULE 26(C), TO QUASH DEPOSITION NOTICE UNDER RULE 45(D), TO VACATE ORDER COMPELLING TESTIMONY, AND REQUEST FOR ALTERNATIVE SERVICE

Served to:

Clerk of the Court

U.S. District Court Eastern District of California 2500 Tulare Street, Suite 1501 Fresno, CA 93721

Due to my current incarceration and pro se status, I am unable to effect service directly on counsels of record. I therefore respectfully request that the Clerk docket this filing and serve it via CM/ECF in accordance with the Court's standard procedures for filings received by mail from incarcerated parties.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the foregoing is true and correct.

Jamie Osuna

CDCR No. BD0868

California State Prison - Corcoran

P.O. Box 347.6

Corcoran, CA 93212